

24 December 2021 – For Immediate Release

BERRI BARMERA COUNCIL AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

After an outstanding number and quality of nominations Berri Barmera Council is very proud to announce our 2022 Community Awards Recipients.

“We had one of the largest nomination fields ever and the quality was exceptional across all categories” said Mayor Hunt, “We are very fortunate to have so many active people doing great things in our community and we must thank the many community members who recognised these outstanding efforts and took the time to submit a nomination.”

Berri Barmera Council has four key community awards: “The Citizen of the Year”, “Young Citizen of the Year”, “Community Event of the Year” and the “Building a Better Community” award. Nominations were reviewed and recipients were endorsed at the Community Grants and Award Selection Committee meeting held on 20 December 2021.

Our **Citizen of the Year** was awarded to **Chrissy Eleftheriadis**, for her dedication and passion towards our community for over 25 years.

As a passionate Social Worker, Chrissy has been a member of the Riverland Drug Action Team and was heavily involved in the planning and delivery of the 2019 ICE forum, which brought strong community discussion around the growing use of drugs within our community and explored initiatives to stop people from turning to drugs.

Through her association with sport, as a player and parent, Chrissy has been a tireless club and regional volunteer working in various committee and executive roles, as an umpire, and coach. Through her club and Riverland roles, Chrissy continues to provide options for young people in our community to play sport from a young age, as well as mentoring young umpires and has been highly involved in the delivery of junior netball programs and Aussie hoops basketball.

With her background in clinical social work, working with a range of ages, backgrounds, socio-economic statuses, and abilities, Chrissy identified that sports within the Riverland region didn’t provide many options for those with disabilities. Acknowledging this, Chrissy has worked hard to make sport more accessible for all individuals within our community, and has supported the introduction of the highly successful disability sports program at the Berri Blazers.

Chrissy has also found time to coach and manage various teams at top senior levels and collaborated with others to bring carnivals and exhibition games to our region.

She has also undertaken a key role in the club management of the Berri Stadium and has been an instrumental team member in the operational development of the Berri Stadium management. In 2020 Chrissy was a primary driver in bringing the Mighty Murray Clash to our region, seeing the Adelaide Thunderbirds play West Coast Fever at the Toyota Arena in Berri.

Berri's hosting of this game not only provided an opportunity for aspiring netballers and the community to see elite athletes in action but also gave an economic boost to our region.

Cameron Dixon has been awarded **Young Citizen of the Year**. As a Head Prefect at Glossop High School, Cameron has relished contributing to his school and community through a range of leadership opportunities. Cameron has been a strong supporter and coordinator of student-led events to promote positive wellbeing and mentoring of younger and upcoming students through his volunteering as a mentor at Berri Primary School and Junior School.

Cameron has a strong academic record of outstanding achievement as a student at Glossop High School. Throughout his schooling, he has received numerous Academic Achievement Awards, including being a recipient of the LJ Hooker Continuing Study Scholarship, a graduate of the South Australian Space School, and a founding member of the GHS Drone Team which was recognised for its success in winning the PIRSA Drone Challenge. Furthermore, Cameron is a State DigIT Representative and has been the worthy recipient of the Joy Mavis-Seidler Musical Scholarship.

Cameron strives to make the community better for all ages and represented our district at the National Lions Youth of the Year finals held in Canberra this year, where he was commended for his contributions to youth leadership, inspiring youth in the region to understand the opportunities and challenges faced by country students.

Cameron also has a passion for sport and has been personally involved in football and basketball as both player and referee. He was the co-captain of the Glossop High School Football team in the Mount Gambier Exchange and plays for Barmera Monash Football Club. As a representative in the State Basketball Referee Development Program, he was notably awarded the Gary Burfitt Memorial Trophy for Best Umpire in the Riverland Basketball Association. Cameron was also a SA School Sports Student Official Finalist for 2021, Basketball Australia U16 National Championships Referee, Basketball SA Referee Development Panel and SANFL Best Community Football Coverage for 2019.

As part of the Glossop High School Media team, Cameron has also been the driver behind live streaming many local sports and events over the past 18 months. These productions have enabled members of our community the opportunity to watch their family and friends online when attendance at events in person was not an option.

Cameron is an inspirational role model, he leads with his academic and sporting achievements, and a commitment to mentoring others, using every opportunity to share his knowledge, skills and commitment to help and support others to prosper is one of his most admirable qualities.

Our **Community Event of the Year** was awarded to the Lone Gum and Monash Community Association, for their planning and hosting of the Monash Centenary Military Ceremony and Monash Hidden Secrets Exposed Exhibition on 30 and 31 August 2021.

There were so many great community events organised this year (especially a large range of district Centenary events) These were all held in trying circumstances, with ever changing rules

under COVID safe plans but it was the combined quality of achievement by this small community group that is to be commended.

Even with COVID lockdowns, this event attracted a high calibre level of guests from the Army, Air Force, Navy, politicians, and local government dignitaries. The event successfully brought veterans and descendants of our community together to celebrate and commemorate the achievements and history of the township.

The success of this event was due to the large number of volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring pride and build spirits within the community.

The Berri Barmera Council **“Building a Better Community” Award** has joint winners this year, with two very different projects that have shown great leadership to deliver outstanding activities that have allowed our community to hold its head high.

This year – Berri Our Town and Barmera Centenary Shop Window Project both will be recognised for great community engagement and a passion to see our towns thrive into the future.

Berri Our Town has worked since 2019 to build partnerships between the Glossop High School and the community to build advocacy to improve mental health awareness and capability within the region. Born out of the award winning Our Town a mental health initiative funded by the Fay Fuller Foundation and implemented in partnership with Clear Horizon and TACSI, this local group of citizen volunteers have been striving towards building pride and identity in the Berri district with a goal of improving the wellbeing of our community. They have been especially active in developing volunteer and mentoring programs, learn to drive support and storytelling projects.

Over the past two years, the Berri Our Town team, have gathered insights into the needs in mental health and wellbeing for the township. They have collaborated with local organisations to look at ways of bringing the community together and sharing stories.

The team aims to enable further positive change in the development of community connection, awareness, and foster partnerships that create initiatives to align with specific mental health challenges.

We will hear a lot more from the Berri Our Town team in the future as they continue undertake action to develop an inclusive town that thrives through community connections. Working towards the creation of a strong identity and town pride where all generations feel welcomed and supported to embed and nurture a culture of positive wellbeing

Our second recipient is the Barmera Centenary Shop Window Project which was an integral part of uniting the community through paying tribute to local history by telling the story of local pioneers in the window displays.

The group was able to activate a large number of community members and groups such as the National Trust, to borrow items and decorations from the community and create paper-mache models to further bring the stories to life. The 14 empty shop windows which have

gained new life, have not only helped to educate but also delighted and amused those who have viewed them with historical information and old-fashioned fun. A special mention must go to the shop owners who have allowed the displays to fill their windows.

These displays have been a collaboration of many different individuals and groups, not only from Barmera but from around the region. The works undertaken by volunteers has not only boosted their confidence and developed new skills, but they have broadened their knowledge of the region and the community members who have been depicted in scenes.

This year, Council will also be presenting a special recognition to Heather Wynands who will be receiving our **“Citizen of Courage Award”**.

Heather’s story is one of soul-bearing, survival, and advocacy as she told the story of her, a vulnerable woman, navigating her way through personal trauma to reduce the stigma of sexual assault victims.

Since sharing her story, Heather has received significant volumes of communication from those inspired by her story. This has empowered others to seek justice and support others who have had similar circumstances.

Heather’s advocacy has helped other victims to voice their stories and seek justice as domestic violence continues to be a significant threat in our society.

The Mayor, Elected members and staff congratulate these very worthy recipients and look forward to presenting their Awards at the ceremony in Berri on Australia Day 26 January 2022. An invitation is extended to all Berri Barmera residents and visitors to enjoy the Australia Day celebrations including a free breakfast with the family and friends of our award winners. We will also be welcoming some 29 new Australians to our District as they undertake their Australian Citizenship ceremony.

For media enquiries:

Contact Karyn Burton, CEO on 8582 1922, or email kburton@bbc.sa.gov.au or the award recipients

For further comment and photo opportunities from the recipients their contact details are as follows:

Citizen of the Year: Chrissy Eleftheriadis (0448 887 754)

Young Citizen of the Year: Cameron Dixon (0499 026 362)

Citizen of Courage Award: Heather Wynands (0457 610 126)

Event of the Year: Monash Centenary Military Ceremony and Monash Hidden Secrets Exposed Exhibition (Ali – 0417 872 233)

Building a Better Community: Joint winners

Berri Our Town (Julie Ahrens 0407 341 616)

*Barmera Centenary Shop Window Project
(Julie Krollig 0439 881 634)*